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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/955,253	09/18/2001	Norbert Kreutz	B06090-D	1665

7590

02/23/2004

Patent Department  
The Gillette Company  
Prudential Tower Building  
Boston, MA 02199

EXAMINER

DAWSON, GLENN K

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3761

12

DATE MAILED: 02/23/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/955,253

Applicant(s)

KREUTZ ET AL.

Examiner

Glenn K Dawson

Art Unit

3761

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 November 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 50-60 and 74-77 is/are pending in the application.  
4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 52,55-57,74 and 75 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 50,51,53,54,58-60 and 77 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 76 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>11</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

***Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114***

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 11-28-03 has been entered.

***Double Patenting***

Claim 76 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 as being a substantial duplicate of claim 74. When two claims in an application are duplicates or else are so close in content that they both cover the same thing, despite a slight difference in wording, it is proper after allowing one claim to object to the other as being a substantial duplicate of the allowed claim. See MPEP § 706.03(k).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

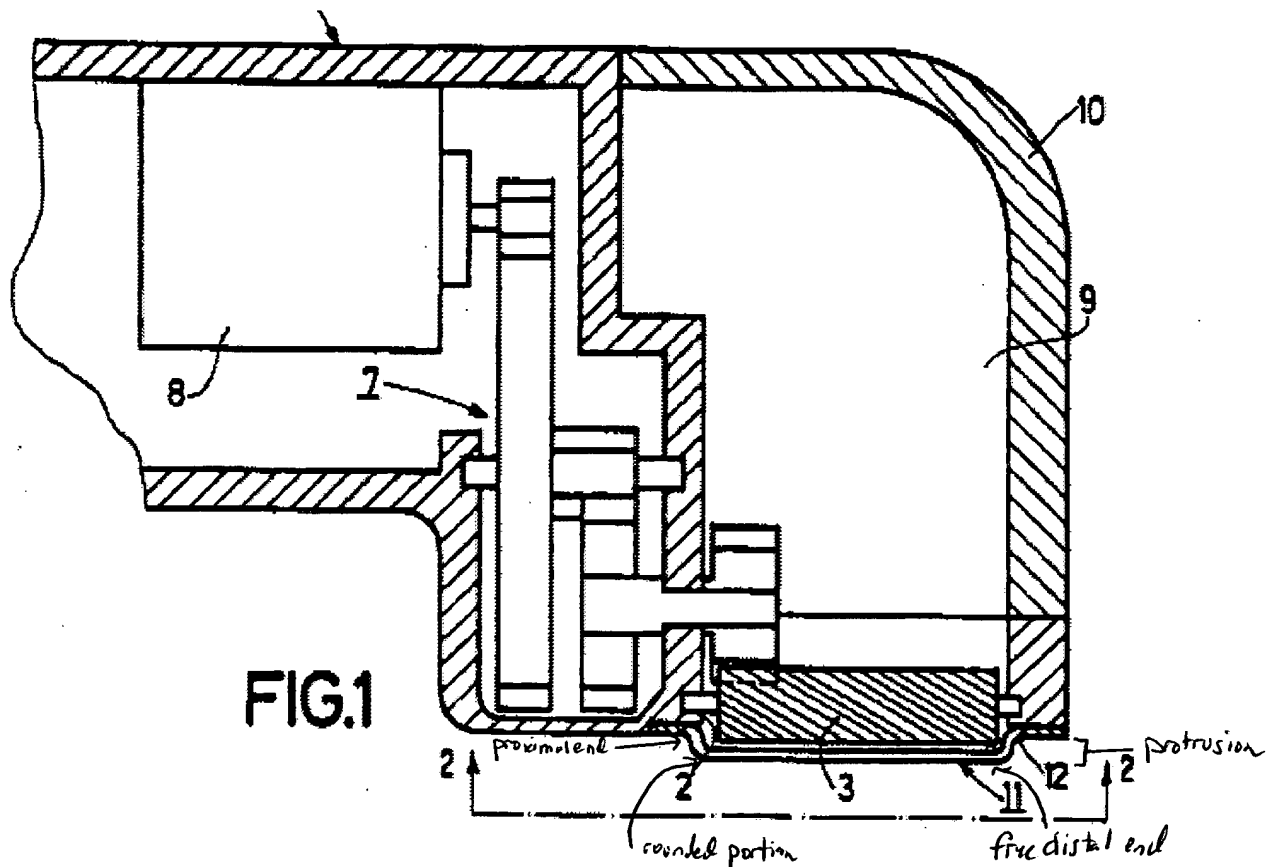
(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 50,51,53 and 58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Schneider, et al.-5041122 or Garenfeld, et al.-'849.

Schneider and Garenfeld both disclose equivalent depilation devices having housings with depilating rollers which grip and pull hair out of the skin and vibrating

plates which exert mechanical vibration on the skin to mask the pain associated with hair removal. The plate has a planar perimeter carrier which has suspended between ends thereof flexible protrusions. The protrusions can be seen in the attached fig. 1.

Regardless of what the plate is constructed of, the material, especially in the thickness shown, would inherently possess flexibility.



The motor, through a gear arrangement, operates the hair removal rollers and vibrates the carrier and protrusions to vibrate against the skin.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 54,59,60 and 77 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schneider, et al.-5041122 or Garenfeld, et al.-'849.

Schneider and Garenfeld both disclose the invention as claimed with the exception of the protrusions or carrier being made out of resilient plastic. As the applicant has not disclosed any criticality as to the use of resilient plastic, nor has any purpose or solving of a problem been associated with the use of plastic, and since the

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examiner contends that even a metal material would work equally as well as the applicant's, the examiner contends that the use of a resilient plastic to make the plate of either Schneider or Garenfeld would have been an obvious design choice.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claims 52, 55-57, 74 and 75 are allowed.

***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments filed 11-28-03 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

The protrusions of the prior art do have distal ends remote from the carrier. The limitation that the distal ends are "above" the proximal ends is met in that given no reference point, a user could hold the prior art housings in such a manner that the claimed configuration could be achieved.

The examiner is not stating that it would have been obvious to place flexible protrusions on the plate, but rather that the plate itself includes flexible protrusions.

Using a resilient plastic to form the plate would not render the plate ineffective for its intended purpose. A material that is "resilient" need not be easily flexed. It just needs to be deformable and returnable to its original orientation.


No interference will be initiated at this time due to the claims not being allowable to the applicant, and because the pending claims are not copied claims of the Caric patent, and are patentably distinct therefrom due to the patent's inclusion of the vibrating means.

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Glenn K Dawson whose telephone number is 703-308-4304. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 7:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael J. Milano can be reached on 703-308-2496. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

  
Glenn K Dawson  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3761

Gkd  
18 February 2004